(a) The Department of Consumer Affairs has not commissioned any survey to assess the effectiveness of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

(b) and (c) It is a testimony to the general awareness of consumenr rights under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 that since the establishment of the three-tier consumer disputes redressal machinery under this Act, nearly 26 lakhs cases have been filed in these fora. Further generation of consumer awareness including popularization of the Act is being done through the multi-media campaign of the Department of Consumer Affairs.

Lifting control under Essential Commodities Act

448. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Chief Ministers of certain States have recently requested the Central Government to lift all controls under the Essential Commodities Act, allowing dealers to buy, stock or sell any quantity of foodgrains;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Rising prices of Essential Commodities

449. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY:
DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY:
SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the details of essential commodities which are monitored by the Price Monitoring Cell;

(b) the details of the essential commodities whose prices have risen between January to June, 2006;

(c) the steps taken to check the price rise;

(d) whether there is any proposal to expand the list of essential commodities under the Essential Commodities Act; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) Price Monitoring Cell is monitoring the prices of 14 essential commodities namely wheat, sugar, rice, gram dal, tur dal, mustard oil, vanaspati oil, salt, tea, milk, atta, potato, onion, ground nut oil.

(b) A comparison of average retail prices of 14 essential commodities between January to June 2006 reveal that prices of wheat, sugar, tur and gram dal had shown increasing trend across all centres which report retail prices. In case of rice, some increase in price was noticed at Delhi, Bhopal, Jaipur, Mumbai, Guwahati and Patna. As regards Mustard oil, price increased at Bhopal, Jaipur, Bhubaneshwar, Guwahati and Kolkata. As regards vanaspati oil, price rose at all centres except Aizwal and Patna. In case of tea, price increased at Delhi and Lucknow. Incase of milk, prices increased at Delhi, Lucknow, Shimla and Mumbai. in case of potato, price increased at Delhi, Lucknow, Shimla, Bhopal, Jaipur, Agartala and Kolkata. In case of salt, price increased at Lucknow, Shimla, Guwahati and Hyderabad.

(c) Government has already taken steps to arrest the increase in prices by taking measures such as augmenting domestic supplies through imports at reduced duty rates, ban on exports of pulses and sugar and regular monitoring of prices of essential commodities. Other steps taken include advice to State Governments to initiate steps to ensure availability of essential commodities at reasonable prices.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. There is no proposal for expanding the list of essential commodities under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. The inclusion of any commodity depends on the demand and supply position.

Persons booked under Essential Commodities Act

450. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state: